

MINUTES
Advisory Committee for International Science and Engineering (AC-ISE)
Virtual Meeting
November 6, 2014
National Science Foundation

The meeting began at 11:00 AM. NSF representatives and some visitors were in the room (Stafford II room 1155.01); members and other guests participated on-line. See Appendix for details.

11:00 AM: State of the ISE Section: Challenges and Opportunities (Wanda Ward and Kelsey Cook)

Following a briefing on the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) and virtual “around the room” introductions, Dr. Ward provided a summary of the status of and recent developments in the Section over the past year. These included: an assessment of NSF’s Overseas Offices by the Science and Technology Institute and NSF’s Response to the Assessment of the Overseas Offices; development of an NSF Strategic Framework, “Advancing Transformative Science and Engineering through International Engagement,” followed by a series of briefings to key stakeholders including the Office of Management and Budget and Office of Science and Technology Policy, NSF Senior Management, and numerous NSF advisory committees; and NSF Director Dr. France Cordova’s recent announcement of future directions for ISE. She also described numerous ISE staffing changes, including the appointments of new Heads of the Tokyo and China Offices, as well as the ongoing search for a Head of the Europe Office; the appointments of Acting Section Heads for ISE and numerous program officer hires. Dr. Cook [\[slides posted\]](#) provided additional details, focusing on staffing (arrivals, departures), funding, programs, and non-programmatic activities. Program highlights were used to illustrate (respectively) “Partnership” (PIRE) and “Workforce” (IRES) activities. Discussion focused on the roles of NSF in general and ISE in particular with respect to science diplomacy (both science for diplomacy and diplomacy for science, including inter-agency and international coordination).

11:45 AM: Report from the ISE Committee of Visitors (Steve McLaughlin)

Dr. McLaughlin presented a total of 9 recommendations derived from the September 16-17 triennial Committee of Visitors review of the ISE Section [\[slides posted\]](#). Discussion was organized around the three “pillars” (Workforce, Partnership, Leadership) outlined in the “Strategic Framework for International Engagement” which was prepared in early 2014 with input from NSF’s internal Foundation-wide International Coordinating Committee. With respect to leadership, Dr. McLaughlin noted NSF’s key role in the Global Research Council as reflective of how the world looks up to NSF. It was noted that the leadership role needs clarification – leadership entails much more than establishing best practices and managing programs. There is a need for a strong voice for science and engineering at the highest levels of government. **A motion to accept the report passed unanimously.**

1:00 PM: Meeting and Discussion with NSF Director – Planning for (O)ISE (France Córdoba)

- Dr. Córdoba announced plans to reabsorb ISE into the Office of the Director. A search is underway for an Office Head, and a distinguished external search committee has been named (details available [on-line](#)).

- Emphasizing the “science” in “international science,” Dr. Córdova cited the new ALMA (Chile) images just announced of planet formation around HL Tau (details [on-line](#)).
- Addressing the “Strategic Framework,” Dr. Córdova noted that the “Workforce” and “partnership” pillars provide a good basis for continuous improvement in areas of strength. She noted the importance of optimizing the impact of workforce efforts, and identifying and clearing partnership roadblocks (including policy hurdles). She agreed with the COV finding that the “Leadership” pillar needs better definition, noting that this is a key defining function of the Section and a prime opportunity for the new Office Head. We need to define what’s missing, then how to proceed. Discussion focused on NSF’s current and potential issue- and region-specific roles in science diplomacy, distinguishing, for example, roles in developed and developing regions. The key importance of forging and fostering synergistic US (e.g., NAS and Department of State) and international (e.g., UN) partnerships was acknowledged, as was the potential input and liaison roles for AC-ISE.
- The COV recommendation concerning clarification of Broader Impacts was discussed, including the need for and risks of “popularization” of basic science. Opportunities to clarify the intrinsic benefits “in the national interest” of global scientific interactions were discussed. The natural growth of international interactions is driven in part by the interests and needs of PIs.

2:00 PM: Presentation of “Advancing Transformative Science and Engineering through International Engagement: A Strategic Framework” and “Assessment of the National Science Foundation’s Overseas Offices: Summary” (Graham Harrison)

- Dr. Harrison provided background and key findings of the Strategic Framework, using a figure from a recent R&D Magazine article to illustrate the dynamic global R&D landscape (available [on-line](#)). The report (which was provided to members as background material, but is not yet public) seeks to identify new opportunities, rather than providing a list of current activities.
- Dr. Harrison explained that the evaluation of the Overseas Offices was spurred by a 2012 OMB request. The report and NSF’s response are not yet in final form; feedback from OMB and OSTP is being considered. The draft report embraces the value of the offices, and suggests that this value could be enhanced through a more strategic utilization (an observation that helped inform the draft Strategic Framework). Suggestions include relocation of the Paris office to Brussels, establishing additional offices in other regions (e.g., Latin America), enhancing reporting from the offices, and modernizing Office IT.

2:40 PM: New business and planning for face-to-face meeting (tentatively 3/26-27/2015) (Steve McLaughlin for Susan Avery)

- Dr. McLaughlin mentioned the on-going evaluation of the Partnership for International Research and Education Program (PIRE), the largest ISE-managed and funded program. John Tsapogas indicated that Abt has been contracted to execute the evaluation, and has begun the process of designing and securing approvals for survey materials, as well as appointing an independent review oversight team. Data is expected in Spring 2015, and the report somewhat later. The AC will be updated at its next meeting, and may choose to appointment a subcommittee to receive and evaluate the report.

- Issues of public access to data, publications, and collections in the international context may be ripe for consideration by and advice from the AC-ISE. NSF may also play a role in helping to establish scientifically rational guidelines for addressing issues of reproducibility and validation.

3:00 PM: Adjourn

APPENDIX: Attendees

<p>MEMBERS:</p> <p>Susan Avery*</p> <p>José Fortes*</p> <p>Susan McCouch*</p> <p>Steven McLaughlin*</p> <p>George Middendorf*</p> <p>Monica Olvera de la Cruz*</p> <p>Efraín O’Neill-Carillo*</p> <p>Anne Petersen*</p> <p>Winston Soboyejo*</p>	<p>NSF:</p> <p>Jessica Arriens</p> <p>Steve Burch</p> <p>Cassidy Burke</p> <p>Lara Campbell*</p> <p>Franklin Carrero-Martinez*</p> <p>Bill Chang</p> <p>Kelsey Cook</p> <p>France Córdova</p> <p>Diane Drew</p> <p>Cassandra Dudka</p> <p>Anne Emig</p> <p>Chuck Estabrook</p> <p>Arthur Fitzmaurice*</p> <p>Graham Harrison*</p> <p>Tom Jones</p> <p>Marjorie Lueck</p> <p>Libby Lyons*</p> <p>Steve Meacham*</p> <p>Jackie Moore</p> <p>Sonia Ortega</p> <p>Carine Polliotti*</p> <p>Jessica Robin</p> <p>Alex Stepanian</p> <p>Nancy Sung*</p> <p>Mark Suskin*</p> <p>Bonnie Thompson</p> <p>John Tsapogas</p> <p>Wanda Ward</p>
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*Phone participant